United Nations CEDAW/C/CAN/Q/8-9/Add.1

# Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
26 September 2016
English
Original: English and French

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**
**Sixty-fifth session**
24 October-18 November 2016
Item 4 of the provisional agenda
**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

## List of issues and questions in relation to the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Canada

**Addendum**

## Replies of Canada*

[Date received: 26 September 2016]

*Note*: The present document is being circulated in English, French and Spanish only.
* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

16-16582 (E) 031016

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1. Canada is committed to promoting and protecting women's and girls' rights and advancing gender equality. The present report provides Canada's responses to the List of advance Issues in relation to the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Canada on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which outlines some of the efforts being undertaken to address existing gender inequalities. The report was prepared collaboratively by federal, provincial and territorial (F-P/T) governments.

2. Given the word limit for this Response and the substantial amount of subquestions, Canada has endeavoured to respond to most of the Committee's questions and has provided a non-exhaustive list of F-P/T measures related to Canada's implementation of the CEDAW. Information that can be found in other reports submitted by Canada to other human rights bodies is referenced. Canada will be pleased to provide the Committee with additional information at the time of the review of its eighth and ninth reports.

3. Any reference to "the Government of Canada" in this report is a reference to the Canadian federal government, while a reference to "Canada" is generally a reference to the F-P/T governments combined. Any reference to a province or territory (for example, British Columbia, Quebec or the Northwest Territories) is generally a reference to its government.

## Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework

### Question 1

4. As explained in Canada's eighth and ninth reports, the CEDAW continues to be implemented through a range of constitutional, statutory, administrative, and policy and programmatic measures (see paragraph 7).

5. Training on domestic and international human rights law is offered regularly to lawyers in the federal public service as part of their continuing legal education. This includes a course on equality and non-discrimination in international human rights law that discusses the rights in the Convention.

6. The National Judicial Institute (NJI) is the principal national body dedicated to continuing education for federally and provincially appointed judges throughout Canada. Although the NJI does not have any training specifically dedicated to the Convention and its Optional Protocol, it does incorporate programming on human rights, diversity and gender issues in many of its offerings.

7. Canada's international human rights treaty obligations are regularly invoked before and by domestic courts at all levels, as well as in front of administrative decision-makers.

8. In 2011, the Supreme Court of British Columbia made noteworthy use of the Convention, as well as the Committee's General Comment No. 21, in a landmark decision on polygamy and religious freedom. The Court determined that the *Criminal Code of Canada*'s prohibition on the practice of polygamy complies with the human rights guarantees in Canada's constitution, finding that the interference with the religious freedom of some individuals is justified in order to prevent harm to women and children.

9. In 2010, the Alberta Court of Appeal revisited sentencing principles for sexual assault. It ruled that an offender who commits a major sexual assault, including rape, against a person, causes harm to both the victim and society. Citing the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (the Charter), the CEDAW, and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Court stated that harm to one member of the community affects the rights and security of others. This is particularly striking in cases involving violence against women.

10. The views of the Committee are also frequently relied upon in refugee determination cases. Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board makes the Committee's General Comments, Concluding Observations and Views available through its Research Program, which provides applicants and decision-makers with reliable information about the human rights situation in claimants' countries of origin.

**Question 2**

11. The Government of Canada is committed to addressing discrimination on the basis of gender in the *Indian Act*. Amendments to the Act in 1985 entitled Indigenous women whose status was revoked to regain it and receive all benefits provided by the Act. Since the 1985 amendments, no one has lost or obtained Indian status on the basis of gender. The 1985 amendments restored eligibility for status to women who had lost status upon marrying a non-Indian man under prior versions of the Act, while enabling them to also transmit status to their children.

12. In response to a decision of the British Columbia Court of Appeal, the Government of Canada adopted in 2011 the *Gender Equity in Indian Registration Act*, which amended the *Indian Act* to ensure that the grandchildren of women who had lost Indian status under previous versions of the *Indian Act* are now also entitled to Indian registration. In terms of implementation, as of May 1, 2016 over 36,000 individuals have been registered pursuant to the Act.

## Access to justice

**Question 3**

***Legal aid***

13. Under their constitutional responsibility for the administration of justice, the provinces and territories, through their respective legal aid plans, are responsible for the management and delivery of legal aid services. Legal aid plans use guidelines to determine legal aid eligibility based on financial criteria, coverage/scope and merit. These eligibility guidelines are designed to ensure that vulnerable populations have access to legal services, which ultimately advances the constitutional right of every individual to have fair and impartial legal proceedings.

14. There are no gender-specific provisions regarding access to legal aid but some provinces and territories provide criminal and civil legal aid services that may primarily benefit women. For example, Alberta helps victims of domestic violence, regardless of financial eligibility, obtain certain types of protection orders. Ontario has special family law services to help people experiencing domestic violence,

regardless of their immigration status in Canada, which includes a free emergency two-hour consultation with a lawyer. Nunavut offers legal aid to qualifying individuals who claim discrimination or harassment with the Nunavut Human Rights Tribunal.

15. The number of women who benefitted from legal aid, including migrant women and women belonging to visible ethnic minority groups and Indigenous women is not always collected by provinces and territories. The table below provides the information that is available for 2015-2016.

| | *Number of women (% of total number receiving legal aid who self-identify their gender)* | *Number of women who self-identify as Indigenous (% of total number who self-identify as Indigenous receiving legal aid)* | *Number of women who self-identify as part of a visible minority (% of total number who self-identify as part of a visible minority receiving legal aid)* | *Number of women applying for an immigration or refugee matter (% of total number of people applying for an immigration or refugee matter)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| British Columbia | 8,420 (30.6%) | n/a | n/a | 288 (37%) |
| Saskatchewan | 4,594 (29%) | 2,893 (28%) | n/a | n/a |
| Manitoba* | 4,236 (40.7%) | 2,007 (42.0%) | 124 (25.6%) | n/a |
| Ontario* | 40,159 (37%) | 5,313 (34%) | n/a | 3,636 (39%) |
| Quebec | 91,390 (41.2%) | n/a | n/a | 2,001 (44%) |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 1,554 (36.6%) | n/a | n/a | n/a |

* Number receiving legal aid certificates.

***Repeal of section 67 of the Canadian Human Rights Act***

16. In preparing for the repeal of section 67, the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) established the National Aboriginal Initiative which developed culturally appropriate training materials for First Nations; facilitated community-based pilot projects to develop internal conflict resolution processes; developed best practices tool-kits for use by First Nations governments; and offered training on applying the *Canadian Human Rights Act* in a First Nations context.

17. The CHRC also held a series of roundtable meetings across the country with Indigenous women, representative of Indigenous women's organizations, and organizations that provide services to Indigenous women to better understand the challenges Indigenous women can face in accessing justice.

18. In terms of human and financial resources in 2014-2015, the CHRC had 197 full-time equivalent staff, and a total budget of $23,689,265. Of this budget, the CHRC spent approximately $3,344,000 on its "human rights knowledge development and dissemination"; $3,453,500 on its "discrimination prevention" program; and $9,432,216 on its "human rights dispute resolution" program.

***Decisions and compensations***

19. In Canada, various modes of redress for violations of women's rights are available, including constitutional remedies as well as statutory and common law remedies, depending on the nature of the right infringed and the form of remedy sought.

20. Two recent Charter challenges resulted in the invalidation of legislation: Descheneaux v. Canada, which concerned sex discrimination in the transmission of Indian status and Bedford v. Canada, which concerned criminal laws that increased the risk to the lives and security of women engaged in prostitution.

21. In 2015, in a case where the plaintiff was subject to workplace harassment and several acts of battery by her boss (defendant), the Ontario Superior Court of Justice found the defendant liable under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* for breaching the plaintiff's rights under section 7(2) to freedom from harassment in the workplace because of sex.

22. That same year, the Quebec Human Rights Tribunal awarded $5,000 in moral damages to a woman who was the victim of sexual harassment in the workplace. The Tribunal found that it was discriminatory infringement based on gender and that it compromised the right to her personal security, the safeguard of her dignity and the respect of her private life guaranteed by the Quebec *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*.

23. In 2013, in the case of a first-year apprentice welder and single mother who had filed a union grievance against her employer after her request to work straight day shifts rather than rotating day and night shifts, to better manage her childcare obligations, was denied, Alberta Arbitration found that the employer was legally obligated to accommodate this request under the Collective Agreement and the *Human Rights Act*. In 2015, the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench upheld the Arbitrator's order.

***Multiple or intersection discrimination***

24. The Canadian legal system recognizes that the combined effects of multiple grounds of discrimination can have a greater impact than discrimination based on a single ground. The *Charter* allows for claimants to bring equality claims based on multiple grounds. The Supreme Court of Canada has acknowledged the intersectional nature of discrimination, and encourages a broad and liberal approach to human rights interpretation rather than a narrow or exclusionary one.

25. The *Canadian Human Rights Act* explicitly prohibits discrimination based on multiple grounds or on their compounded effects in section 3.1. Intersectionality is also integral to the CHRC's approach to gender integration. When dealing with issues based on sex, the CHRC recognizes that intersecting grounds (such as disability, race, ethnic origin and family status) should be factored into the analysis. The CHRC's staff are guided by the "Gender Integration Framework" to systematically assess the differential impacts on women, and CHRC staff must consider any adverse impacts produced by other intersecting grounds.

## National machinery for the advancement of women

**Question 4**

26. Status of Women Canada (SWC) is an agency within the federal government headed by a Minister. In 2016, the Government of Canada appointed a full Minister dedicated to women's issues. Further, the Government of Canada provided new

investments of $23.3 million over five years to SWC to bolster its capacity in three key areas:

- increasing SWC's regional presence of its Women's Program, allowing SWC to work more closely with regional and provincial and territorial organizations to address issues affecting women and girls as well as advance efforts to make progress in achieving gender equality;
- ensuring SWC is able to support other government organizations to do a more robust gender-based analysis of programs, policies, legislative and other initiatives, thereby allowing for more informed decision-making; and
- creating a new research and evaluation unit within SWC which will support innovative, evidence-based research to support action on government priorities as well as the development of a more rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluation.

27. In addition, under the government's change to the Women's Program, advocacy activities directed at F-P/T or municipal governments will once again be eligible for funding within the scope of a proposed project. Such advocacy activities were declared ineligible for funding in 2007.

28. In 2006, Quebec adopted a public policy for equality between women and men, entitled *Pour que l'égalité de droit devienne une égalité de fait*.

## Stereotypes and harmful practices

### Question 5

***Stereotyping and negative media portrayals of women***

29. In order to reduce gender inequalities in Canada, including stereotypes and unequal treatment that lead to poor outcomes for women and girls, the Government of Canada requires federal organizations to take gender considerations into account in the development of legislation, policies and programs. By providing information, tools, training and expert advice, SWC plays a lead role in building the capacity of federal organizations to use Gender-based Analysis. SWC also funds projects across Canada related to stereotyping and negative portrayal of women in the media.

30. The Government of Northwest Territories seeks to address stereotyping through education. Territorial public servants participate in mandatory Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training intended to provide increased understanding about Indigenous culture, enhanced awareness, recognition and respect in the workplace and to foster a spirit of inclusion among employees. The position of Indigenous women is strengthened overall by bringing awareness to stereotyping.

31. Since 2010, and to encourage the promotion of egalitarian behaviours and models, the Government of Quebec has supported the following:

- the adoption of the Charter for a healthy and diverse body image, in partnership with the advertising, fashion and media industries;

- the completion of various tools and the hosting of events to inform and raise awareness among education services staff and parents about egalitarian relationships;
- the organization of parades on body diversity and the raising of awareness among high school youth about body image;
- the hosting of two forums on the issue of hypersexualization.

32. In 2015, the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council produced a gender-based analysis document titled *Promote Positive Images of Women: Responsible Marketing and Media* in response to concerns raised by the public regarding how women and girls are portrayed in the media.

33. In 2015, the Government of Ontario released an updated Health and Physical Education curriculum for grades 1-8 and 9-12. Students learn — in age-appropriate ways — about gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment, online safety, including the risks of sexting, and both caring and exploitive behaviour.

34. In response to the 2nd National Roundtable on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls, Nunavut is participating in work on a national public awareness campaign to target negative attitudes towards and elevate the image of Indigenous women in Canada. Nunavut will also be designing a subsequent public awareness campaign that fits the distinct issues and customs of the territory.

***Non-traditional studies and recruitment***

35. In 2014, the Government of Canada announced new funding over two years under the Youth Employment Strategy's Career Focus, towards supporting up to 3,000 internships in high-demand fields, such as in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and supporting skilled trades and apprenticeships through grants, loans, tax credits, Employment Insurance benefits and the Red Seal program. In 2014-2015, the National Research Council's Industrial Research Assistance Program funded about 1,000 of these targeted internships. This initiative increased internships in growth sectors for participants, including women.

36. Ontario's Women in Engineering Mentorship Initiative is a voluntary learning and development opportunity where women engineering students are partnered with women engineers working in the Ontario Public Service. The goal is to help future female engineers transition into a traditionally male-dominated profession through mentorship and networking opportunities.

37. In 2015, the *Sparking Interest* Girls' Forum, hosted by Manitoba Status of Women, brought together primary school girls for a learning event to meet and engage with skilled tradeswomen and women working in STEM. The goal of this event was to debunk preconceived ideas about women in skilled trades; profile women in a number of trades, and provide answers to questions about women working in the skilled trades and STEM occupations.

***Labour market, education and public and political life***

38. In 2013, Quebec has completed the deployment of the Femmessor network in 17 regions of Quebec, which aims to encourage female entrepreneurship. Since its

creation in 2004, Femmessor agencies have lent to entrepreneurs more than $11.4 million which enabled the creation and maintenance of over 2,770 jobs.

39. In 2014, Ontario introduced the "comply or explain" regulation that requires companies listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange to report publicly on their approach to increase the number of women on their boards and in executive officer positions. Ontario is working on additional ways to improve the representation of women in leadership positions and support women's economic empowerment, including the development of a gender wage gap strategy.

40. In 2016, Yukon launched a new gender equality indicators website that provides statistical and qualitative information on the status of women in the territory. The Shifting Territory — Indicators of Yukon Gender Equality website will enable the effective implementation of gender inclusive and diversity analysis throughout the Yukon government in support of advancing equality of women and men.

41. In 2015, Alberta established a Ministry of the Status of Women to advance gender equality. The ministry's priority areas include: violence against women and girls, women's economic security and women in leadership and democratic participation. It also leads the implementation of gender-based analysis (GBA+) as part of a larger gender mainstreaming strategy.

42. In 2016, the Government of Canada launched a call for proposals for projects that will advance women's democratic participation in Canada, including immigrant women, ethnic minority women and Indigenous women.

43. Quebec's new policy on immigration, participation and inclusion, *Together, we are Québec*, aims to break down barriers that continue to limit the capacity for action of migrant women and women from ethnocultural minorities to find employment, obtain the services to which they are entitled or be fully engaged in community life.

44. In 2014, the Interministerial Women's Secretariat of Prince Edward Island provided project funding to engage with female migrant workers to prepare a leadership toolkit that will include tools for migrant worker self-advocacy.

## Child, early and forced marriages and honour crimes

### Question 6

***Bill S-7***

45. Bill S-7 was given Royal Assent on 18 June 2015. All the amendments are now in force, except for the polygamy amendment to the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*. The amendments in the Bill to the *Civil Marriage Act* came into force on Royal Assent and the amendments in the Bill to the *Criminal Code* came into force on 17 July 2015. This Act is aimed at improving the protection of women and children, including immigrant women and girls, from harmful practices, such as child and/or forced marriage.

***Collection of data***

46. There are no reliable statistics on the incidence of underage and forced marriage in Canada at the national level. With the Bill S-7 amendments to the *Criminal Code*, there are now new specific offences that could be used to collect criminal justice system data.

47. The South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario conducted a study released in 2013, indicating that 219 persons who had been involved in forced marriages were known to front-line workers between 2010 and 2012 in Ontario. Where those marriages were celebrated was not confirmed in the report.

48. To date, there have been no reported cases of convictions relating to female genital mutilation under sections 268 or 273.3 of the *Criminal Code*.

49. In Quebec, for 2015-2016, data on hospital stays in Quebec's hospital centres that provide general and specialized care revealed that there were 10 hospitalizations for a personal history of female genital mutilation.

*Training*

50. Justice Canada and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) have provided training to front line workers, including police officers, on legislative changes resulting from Bill S-7.

51. The F-P/T Working Group on Underage and Forced Marriage, "Honour" Based Violence and Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting provides a forum for inter-governmental information exchange about relevant legislation, policies, interagency protocols, training materials, risk assessment tools, and public awareness and education material to prevent and respond to these forms of family violence.

52. The Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions of Quebec provides educational material on forced marriage and honour-based violence to criminal and penal prosecutors. He also notifies them when new legislation on the matter comes into force, as he did when Bill S-7 came into force.

53. In addition, work is under way in Quebec to develop specialized training for health and social services case workers and managers on the following topics: (1) arranged marriages, honour crimes and intra-family coercion, (2) excision and infibulation, (3) violence and discrimination against people.

54. In Prince Edward Island, the Newcomers Society (settlement agency) provides education to members of the RCMP by providing information and identifying cultural differences associated with refugee groups settling in the province. Members also have access to Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage online learning modules. Some municipal police forces have had training in honour violence and human trafficking.

55. Canada has taken other steps to address the vulnerability of women in the immigration system, including guidelines and training to immigration officers to assist them in processing requests for an exception due to abuse or neglect to the condition for certain sponsored spouses and partners to reside with their sponsor, and in handling sensitive information related to these requests. As part of measures

to address early and forced marriage, the Government of Canada has also implemented operational guidelines for immigration officers on how to address forced marriage.

56. In Quebec, airport reception service staff of the Quebec department of immigration, diversity and inclusion were trained on steps to follow when they encounter immigrants who show perceptive signs that could indicate the presence of domestic or intra-family violence, which includes forced marriage.

## Violence against women

### Question 7

***Evaluations***

57. The *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* and related amendments to the *Criminal Code* contained in former Bill C-32 came into force in July 2015. The legislation calls for a Parliamentary Committee to be established in order to conduct a review of the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* five years after its coming into force. The Government of Canada is conducting a Victim Services National Data Requirement Study in order to provide data for the Parliamentary review and to monitor the implementation of related *Criminal Code* amendments. In addition, the government will continue to provide training on the legislation that is subject to evaluation. It also makes funding available to provincial and territorial (P/T) governments for the implementation of the Act and those activities will also be evaluated.

58. P/T measures addressing violence against women — referred to in Canada's eighth and ninth reports — that have been evaluated or reviewed include:

- Quebec's 2008-2013 government action plan on sexual assault (paragraph 86): In November 2014, a report on the implementation of the action plan determined that it contributed to the following: mitigating the challenges that victims may face in being heard, referrals and psychosocial assistance; ensuring that the information and support that victims and their families need is accessible; and reducing risk factors.
- Changing Attitudes, Changing Lives: Ontario's Sexual Violence Action Plan (para. 85): in March 2016, a progress report outlined key achievements under the Plan, including: a multi-faceted #WhoWillYouHelp media campaign, which increased the number of Ontarians agreeing that they have an obligation to intervene when witnessing sexual harassment; a provincial summit on sexual violence and harassment convening more than 700 community leaders, activists and front-line workers, which contributed to improving their knowledge and understanding of the challenges faced in responding to sexual violence and harassment in diverse communities and of the practices to prevent sexual violence and to promote services to survivors.
- Northwest Territories' Protection against Family Violence Act (see para. 71): In 2010 and 2011, evaluations examined how the Act was meeting its goals of awareness, access and protection from family violence and a number of amendments were advanced, including giving the Supreme Court authority to vary an Emergency Protection Order (EPO) during the review process;

providing the government authority to review EPO transcripts for training and evaluation purposes; increasing the maximum fine amount; and clarifying the available terms and conditions of an EPO.

***Statistical Data***

59. In Canada, there are three main sources of information on victims of crime: the General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization, which is self-reported, as well as the annual Homicide Survey and the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey, based on police-reported crime.

60. According to the 2014 GSS, females were most likely to report being a victim of physical assault, followed by sexual assault and robbery. According to the UCR, in 2014, females represented 80% of sexual assault victims. The 2014 GSS also indicated that sexual assaults are the least likely crime to be brought to the attention of police with only 5% of all sexual assaults reported to the police, compared to 38% of physical assaults and 45% of robberies.

61. Intimate partner violence accounted for two-thirds (66%) of all family violence in 2014 with the majority of victims of intimate partner violence being women (79%). While women and men self-report similar rates of spousal violence through the GSS, women were twice as likely as men (34% versus 16% respectively) to experience the most severe forms of spousal victimization, such as being sexually assaulted, beaten, choked or threatened with a gun or knife.

62. According to Statistics Canada's Homicide Survey data for 2014, rates of intimate partner homicide have dropped by 40% between 1994 and 2014 and by 26% between 2004 and 2014. Women, however, continue to be at a higher risk of intimate partner homicide than men (4.4 versus 1.1 incidents per 1 million). Female youth, aged 15 to 19 years, are more than 13 times more likely to be victims of intimate partner homicide than male youth of the same age.

**Question 8**

63. In order to ensure sufficient protection and access for women and girls victims of violence, including women in vulnerable situations, F-P/T governments continuously work to improve their supports and assistance.

64. For example, starting in 2016-2017, the Government of Canada is providing $89.9 million over two years for the construction and renovation of over 3,000 shelters and transition houses. It is also spending $10.4 million to support the construction of five new shelters and renovation of up to 20 existing shelters on-reserve over three years, up to $33.6 million over five years and up to $8.3 million ongoing to better support shelters and to provide increased safety and security to victims of domestic violence in First Nation communities.

65. In May 2016, amendments to *Manitoba's Domestic Violence and Stalking Act* came into force and removed the requirement that a protection order only be granted where it is necessary for the immediate or imminent protection of an applicant and replaced these requirements with broader criteria based on the seriousness or urgency of the circumstances.

66. Saskatchewan has recently implemented a Northern Transportation Program to help women and children fleeing violence in remote communities, and will open a new transition house in 2016-2017 that will serve north-eastern Saskatchewan, including communities with high populations of Indigenous people.

67. In 2016, Prince Edward Island's Premiers Action Committee on Family Violence released a multi-year strategy which focuses on the following priority areas: Awareness, education, and engagement; Coordination and training; Interventions and service delivery; Policy, protocols, and legislation; Research and evaluation.

68. Alberta continues to invest approximately $95 million annually to support Albertans affected by family violence and to implement the Family Violence Framework. This work is focused on enhancing community supports; reviewing legislation; increasing resources to address family violence; knowledge mobilization and training; and providing income supports to persons fleeing abuse.

69. In May 2016, Yukon released its 10 year Mental Wellness Strategy with the support of Yukon First Nations and the Mental Health Association. The primary objective of the Strategy will be to increase seamless mental health, trauma and substance use services with equitable access; a full continuum approach that spans the lifetime; cascading and need-appropriate service delivery and service matching; and to be accessible through any entry point or provider in the Yukon system in a culturally competent manner.

70. Provincial and territorial governments also offer referral services and information resources to ensure access to these support services. For example, in Ontario, 24-hour crisis lines offer crisis counselling, emotional support, safety planning, and referrals for abused women. The services are free and translation is available in a number of languages.

71. In the Northwest Territories, through "in-person" contact or telephone outreach, Victim Service Workers offer immediate emotional support; information on safety planning, emergency shelters, court processes and accompaniment; accompaniment to an RCMP detachment, hospital or health centre; assistance with victim impact statements, applications to the Victims of Crime Emergency Fund and registrations for victim notification programs; and referrals to community programs and services.

72. In Prince Edward Island, a series of protocols has been developed to ensure timely access and appropriate actions by and with police, victim services support, hospital services, income support, use of Emergency Protection Orders and access to emergency and second stage shelter services as well as outreach counselling for women experiencing family violence.

## Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

### Question 9

73. The Government of Canada's Human Trafficking Taskforce, the body responsible for implementing Canada's National Action Plan commitments, coordinates the federal anti-human trafficking response and reports annually on

progress to the public. Three annual reports on progress on the Action Plan have been released and a horizontal evaluation of the Plan is scheduled for 2016-2017.

74. The RCMP's Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre (HTNCC) monitors and/or coordinates anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts in relation to prevention, as well as ongoing human trafficking investigations and prosecutions. The HTNCC regularly gathers intelligence from Canadian law enforcement in an effort to maintain an ongoing threat assessment on human trafficking.

75. As of January 2016, HTNCC's research has identified 330 cases since 2005 where human trafficking-specific charges were laid. Of the total, 311 are domestic human trafficking cases and 19 are international human trafficking cases. The majority of the domestic human trafficking cases are for sexual exploitation, whereas the international human trafficking cases are primarily related to forced labour.

76. Of the 330 human trafficking cases, 94 have completed the Court process with human trafficking-specific and/or -related convictions (i.e. procuring, living off the avails of prostitution, forcible confinement, keeping a common bawdy house, etc.). These 94 cases involve 220 victims and 122 individuals who were convicted of multiple offences. Additionally, 38 of the 330 human trafficking cases have had other outcomes. Currently, 198 of the 330 human trafficking cases remain before the Courts and involve approximately 314 accused and 300 victims. The longest sentence for human trafficking for sexual exploitation involved a conviction by a Judge and totalled 23 years.

77. The HTNCC, in consultation with law enforcement, lawyers and service providers, provides a number of venues for training law enforcement officials, including:

- a five-day Human Trafficking Investigator's Course for Canadian law enforcement.
- human trafficking awareness in the RCMP national academy curriculum, which means RCMP recruits are now equipped with basic human trafficking awareness before they enter the field.

78. The RCMP has three regional Human Trafficking Awareness Coordinators in British Columbia, Quebec and Nova Scotia, who continue to develop and raise awareness about human trafficking among various law enforcement agencies, government agencies, NGOs, youth, and the public.

79. In British Columbia, ten communities have received in-depth training on human trafficking over the past three years, including social workers, Crown Counsel, community service providers, police and others. Further, the province's Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons continues to promote the course "Human Trafficking: Canada is Not Immune" to all community service providers and front line responders via its website.

80. Ontario provides on-going and specialized training and education sessions related to trafficking in persons and prostitution offences to prosecutors, police and victim services staff. Further training sessions on human trafficking have been presented at Crown Summer School Courses.

81. Through its Sexual Assault Investigator course at the Ontario Police College, the Ontario Provincial Police Academy provides training to front-line officers with the view of protecting female victims from trafficking and prostitution and building awareness of related legislation.

82. In Quebec, the Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions provides educational material on prosecutions regarding human trafficking and prostitution to criminal and penal prosecutors and has offered training in this respect.

83. Newfoundland and Labrador has established its own collaborative training initiative between the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Police Force, St. John's Crime Prevention Committee and the Newfoundland Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Center. These organizations have provided police officers and cadets with knowledge of human trafficking, the sex trade, and the problems faced by sex workers.

## Participation in political and public life

### Question 10

84. Several governments in Canada are taking measures to increase the number of women in elected decision-making bodies, including through training and mentoring.

85. For example, Quebec's strategy to increase the representation of women in positions of influence and power in both political and economic spheres is intended to raise awareness among women and in the fields concerned. Since its launch in 1999, the *À égalité pour décider* program supported over 450 projects, including 31 during the last two years. It also maintained its financial support for the Centre for Development of Women in Governance in order to train and support women who are likely to be involved at various decision-making levels.

86. New Brunswick launched a campaign using social media to encourage more women to put their names forward for representation in the 2016 municipal elections. Women were encouraged to fill positions available at local governments, district education councils, and the regional health authorities throughout the province.

87. Alberta is bringing together strong female elected leaders and thought leaders in the community in a non-partisan context to leverage knowledge, form mentorship programs and communities of practice to support women who want to run for office and supporting training such as Campaign School.

88. Nova Scotia has for several years been providing a women's campaign school for women interested in running in municipal elections, and the next campaign school will be held in October 2016.

89. In Newfoundland and Labrador, in 2015, 16 Young Women in Leadership workshop sessions were delivered across the province to encourage young women aged 16 to 30 to become active in politics and community leadership roles.

***Women in leadership positions***

90. Respect for diversity is Canada's strength, and a driving force behind Canada's achievements — culturally, politically, and economically. This commitment was reaffirmed with the appointment of Canada's current federal Cabinet, in which 50% of Ministers are women.

91. Women represent an average of 26% of elected members of provincial and territorial Legislative Assemblies. As of October 2015, three provincial premiers are women. Across Canada, 18% of mayors and 28% of councillors are women, a 2% increase since 2010.

92. As of June 2015, women held approximately 34% of the nearly 4300 Governor-in-Council appointments, including 42% of Deputy Ministers, 33% of appointees to agencies, boards and commissions, 37% of appointees to administrative tribunals and 34% of judiciary appointees. Women also represent 55% of all federal government employees in Canada, with 45.9% of Federal Public Service executives being women.

## Education

**Question 11**

93. In Canada, public elementary and secondary education is free and compulsory for all children and youth who meet various age and residence requirements, regardless of race, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, family status or sexual orientation, or any other factor(s).

94. P/T governments also have targeted measures, including legislative measures, to ensure inclusive access. In Ontario, for example, the Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy aims to help the education community identify and remove discriminatory biases and systemic barriers in order to support student achievement and well-being.

95. Nunavut's *Education Act of 2008*, Part 6, section 41(1), ensures access to all children, by stating that: "A student who requires adjustments to the education program or support to meet his or her learning needs or to achieve appropriate curriculum outcomes is entitled to such adjustments and support".

96. More information on measures undertaken to improve access to education of African-Canadian and Indigenous children can be found in paragraphs 25-29 of Canada's twenty-first to twenty-third reports on the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (ICERD) and paragraphs 227-238 of Canada's 2014 Interim report on the ICERD.

## Employment

**Question 12**

***Pay equity***

97. Most governments in Canada have pay equity legislation, provisions or policies in place that address gender wage gap discrepancies within their respective

public service and some have legislation which requires equal pay for work of equal value in the private sector. This legislation is being implemented through complaint mechanisms and through other means, for example:

- Division III (Equal Wages) of Part III of the *Canada Labour Code* allows Labour Program inspectors, who have the authority to examine federally regulated employers' payroll and other records, to notify the Canadian Human Rights Commission where there are reasonable grounds to believe that the employer is engaging in gender-based wage discrimination.
- An aggrieved employee in Saskatchewan may make a complaint under *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*, which may be followed by an investigation, and a wage assessment against the employer to account for the wages that the employee ought to have been paid. If a wage assessment is not appealed, or when appeals have been exhausted, a Certificate will be issued based on the wage assessment and/or appeal outcomes, and represents the final decision on a wage matter.
- In Quebec, companies with 10 or more employees must produce yearly the employer declaration on pay equity, which allows Quebec's Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité au travail to identify the level of enforcement of the *Quebec Pay Equity Act* and to target its support and monitoring interventions within the companies. Employees can file a complaint if they believe that there is a lack of compliance with the process established in the legislation.
- The Northwest Territories has an Equal Pay Commissioner who is appointed under the *Public Service Act* and responsible for the right to equal pay for work of equal value. The Commissioner receives and investigates equal pay complaints and helps to resolve disputes about equal pay for work of equal value.

98. Canada recognizes that the gender wage gap is an issue that prevents women across Canada from reaching their fullest potential and also recognizes that the Canadian labour market, as with many western nations, continues to be highly gender segmented. Efforts are still being made by governments to improve this situation.

99. In 2015, Ontario appointed a Gender Wage Gap Steering Committee to identify factors that cause the continued wage gap in Ontario, hold consultations and recommend actions to be taken by government, business, labour, and other organizations and individual leaders to close the gap. The Committee recommendations, when released, will inform development of the government's Gender Wage Gap Strategy.

100. Quebec is currently working to renew its commitments to the female labour force in the context of the 2016-2021 government strategy on gender equality.

***Child care***

101. The Government of Canada is committed to working with provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous peoples to create a new early learning and child care (ELCC) Framework to ensure that affordable, high-quality, flexible

and fully inclusive child care is available to families who need it. The government will invest $500 million in 2017-2018 to support the establishment of the new Framework, including $100 million for on-reserve ELCC. In addition, $29.4 million in 2016-2017 will be provided for repairs and renovations of Indigenous ELCC facilities through two programs: First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative, and Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve.

102. In July 2016, the Government of Canada introduced a new Canada Child Benefit, replacing three existing benefits with one simplified monthly benefit, to provide families with more money to help with the high cost of raising children.

103. In 2015, British Columbia introduced the new BC Early Childhood Tax Benefit to further help with the costs of raising a young child. The benefit provides $146 million annually to approximately 180,000 families with children under the age of six (up to $55 a month per child).

104. In 2016, Saskatchewan released its Saskatchewan Early Years Strategy, which includes a commitment to, among other things, ensure children benefit from high quality environments in child care while their parents work or go to school. The plan also commits to simplify the child care subsidy process for parents.

105. In 2016, Nova Scotia released its plan to improve regulated child care in the province, including making child care more affordable for families by investing in higher subsidy rates and investing to address historically low wages for early childhood educators. In 2016-2017, the government will invest an additional $6.6 million to subsidize childcare spaces and increase wage grants for early childhood educators, and support childcare centres in providing inclusive programming.

***Disadvantaged groups of women***

106. Governments in Canada are undertaking a number of targeted measures to increase access to employment for disadvantaged groups of women. Examples of these include:

- In 2015-2016, Newfoundland and Labrador developed Gender Equity and Diversity Plans designed to improve employment opportunities for the four target groups in resource industries: (1) women; (2) Indigenous people; (3) visible minorities; and (4) people with disabilities.
- Ontario provides time-limited grant funding to community-based projects that deliver employment and entrepreneurship training to increase women's access to employment opportunities. Several of the community-based projects funded focus specifically or mostly on Indigenous women, or immigrant and refugee women.
- Alberta provides funding to the Distinctive Employment Counselling Services of Alberta to provide the Opportunity Plus program in Edmonton. It offers services primarily to women with barriers to employment resulting from a mental or physical disability, domestic and family violence, or prostitution.

***Temporary Foreign Workers***

107. The Government of Canada publishes a pamphlet informing temporary foreign workers about their rights while working in Canada and a confidential TipLine and Online Fraud Reporting Tool to improve the detection of worker mistreatment. To promote the fair treatment of workers, employer inspections are conducted and non-compliant employers may receive monetary penalties and/or bans from the Program.

108. British Columbia has identified vulnerable workers as a focus of priority in the BC Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking, in particular, temporary foreign workers and nannies/live-in caregivers. Its Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons assisted the West Coast Domestic Workers Association to develop and deliver the Preventing Labour Exploitation and Human Trafficking Project from 2014-2016 to raise awareness about labour trafficking, including the exploitation of women migrant domestic workers.

109. Alberta established the Temporary Foreign Worker Advisory Office to ensure that temporary foreign workers are aware of their rights and responsibilities, and to help find solutions to unfair, unsafe or unhealthy working conditions. The Office provides services in 170 languages, and publications are available in fourteen languages, including the comprehensive Temporary Foreign Workers — A Guide for Employees.

110. Saskatchewan's 2013 *Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act* protects foreign nationals, including women migrant domestic workers, from mistreatment and exploitation by recruiters, immigration consultants and employers while being recruited and immigrating to Saskatchewan.

111. Manitoba's *2009 Worker Recruitment and Protection Act*'s aims to facilitate the effective and ethical recruitment of temporary foreign workers and to provide safeguards to protect workers vulnerable to exploitation. The Act provides for proactive enforcement of worker protection standards through the direct inspection of workplaces employing temporary foreign workers rather than the complaint-driven approaches.

112. Quebec has implemented the following measures to prevent and support, where appropriate, temporary foreign workers who could be facing vulnerable situations:

- Following the abolition of the Live-in Caregiver Program, Quebec has developed a work contract for home care providers so that these individuals are no longer forced to live with their employer.
- The interdepartmental standing committee on the protection of temporary foreign workers ensures the protection of low-skilled temporary foreign workers who are recruited abroad, primarily through the implementation of information and support mechanisms.

113. In addition, Quebec funds an interpretation, assistance and referral service for immigrants to inform individuals with a temporary resident permit under the Live-in Caregiver Program of their rights and the responsibilities of employers, and to refer them to the public services they need.

## Health

### Question 13

***Sexual and reproductive health services***

114. There are no legal restrictions to abortion in Canada. Access to abortion and related services are considered medically necessary procedures under the *Canada Health Act*, regulated by P/T governments as a health and medical matter and funded under P/T health insurance plans.

115. All P/T governments offer access to sexual and reproductive health services including to women and girls living in rural or remote regions, Indigenous women, migrant women (regardless of their legal status), African Canadian women, and women with disabilities. Examples of additional targeted measures include:

- Manitoba's Healthy Sexuality Action Plan provides direction to government, regional health authorities, and community health and social service agencies to address poor sexual health outcomes for populations most adversely affected. Priority populations include youth, sexual and gender minorities, First Nations, Métis and Inuit people, refugee and newcomer populations, and older adults.
- In British Columbia, the First Nations Health Authority aims to improve geographic and equitable access to culturally competent, holistic and wellness focused health prevention and promotion services, including reproductive health. The province's ACCESS clinic at the BC Women's Hospital and Health Centre provides women with disabilities with pelvic exams, contraceptive advice, menstrual management, sexually transmitted infections screening, among other referral services.

116. Examples of measures established to ensure that the exercise of conscientious objection by health professionals does not impede effective access to abortion include:

- The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario's Professional Obligations and Human Rights policy, sets out physicians' professional and legal obligations to provide health services without discrimination and includes expectations for physicians who limit the health services they provide because of their personal values and beliefs, such as effective referral to another healthcare provider.
- The College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia's Professional Standards and Guidelines regarding access to medical care sets out expectations for physicians who make personal choices not to provide a treatment or procedure based on their values and beliefs. The province offers a provincial-wide toll-free telephone line for health care providers and patients regarding unplanned or unwanted pregnancy; this line also provides referrals for women seeking pregnancy termination.

***Age-appropriate sexual education***

117. The following are examples of age-appropriate sexual education, which is being offered in schools across the country:

- Ontario's updated *Health and Physical Education Curriculum* (Grade 1 to Grade 12) includes a comprehensive sexual education component adapted to the age and development of students.
- Nova Scotia's *Sex?-A Healthy Sexuality Resource* for grade 7 students and Manitoba's *Growing up OK* puberty resource for children aged 9-12 provide comprehensive sexual health and human sexuality information, including on gender identity.
- Alberta Health Services' teachingsexualhealth.ca offers sexual health teachers and educators evidence-based sexual health information. The site, which is recognized as an authorized teaching resource by Alberta Education, offers lesson plans for public school teachers, grades 4 to 12, online teacher workshops, fact sheets, videos and a parent portal.
- In Quebec, the *Mosaïk* project offers education tools to promote a healthy and responsible sexuality among youth in a school context.

**Question 14**

118. Governments offer a range of sexual and reproductive health information and public health programs and services. For example:

- In British Columbia, Healthlink BC provides 24/7 telehealth services and online resources available across the province related to sexual and reproductive health, including specific resources on contraception.
- Manitoba, Quebec, New Brunswick and British Columbia fund sexual health clinics, including youth clinics, which offer services such as testing for pregnancy and sexually transmitted blood-borne infections, reproductive health information and supplies as well as referrals to other requires health and social services.

**Question 15**

119. The National Anti-Drug Strategy aims to contribute to safer and healthier communities through coordinated efforts to prevent use, treat dependency and reduce the production and distribution of drugs in the illicit market. The Strategy is comprised of an action plan with the three pillars of prevention, treatment and enforcement. The Government of Canada will continue to encourage the development of correctional programs for female offenders that address substance abuse in a gender-informed way and considers women's social, economic and cultural situation in society.

120. Provincial and territorial governments apply a strong public health orientation in their drug treatment and prevention efforts. Examples of targeted initiatives include:

- Alberta's Parent-Child Assistance Program addresses the needs of women at risk through intensive mentorship support services and by connecting clients

to services such as alcohol and drug treatment, medical care, mental health services and housing supports.

- In Newfoundland and Labrador, there are mental health and addictions counselling services in approximately 59 offices across the province, a provincial alcohol and drug recovery centre offering medical withdrawal management, opioid treatment services in most regions of the province, provincial addictions treatment centres, a provincial mental health crisis line and a Mental Health Mobile response team.
- In British Columbia, women and children living with HIV and AIDS have access to specialized wraparound interdisciplinary clinical health care and social/therapeutic supports. HIV medications are offered at no charge to all British Columbia residents.
- In Ontario, there is a network of 21 HIV clinics that provides multidisciplinary HIV specialty care. There are also population-specific networks and front-line workers that provide capacity-building services and other health and community services to increase capacity to provide appropriate services to all populations in Ontario most impacted by HIV.

121. In 2016, the Government of Canada launched a process to solicit funding proposals to support community-based interventions aimed at prevention of sexually transmitted and bloodborne infections, and to increase access to sexual health services for key populations.

122. The Government of Canada continues to support prevention and treatment programming and interventions that are aimed at reducing and preventing alcohol, drug and solvent abuse among First Nations and Inuit populations, and at supporting overall community wellness. For example, the government continues to support the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program and the National Youth Solvent Abuse Program, which together support a network of 43 addiction treatment centres that provide culturally relevant inpatient and outpatient programming. These programs also support drug and alcohol prevention services in the majority of First Nations and Inuit communities.

## Indigenous women

### Question 16

***Health care services***

123. Under its Long-Term Strategy to End Violence Against Indigenous Women, Ontario is engaging Indigenous partners on mental health and addictions supports for Indigenous women who are vulnerable to or impacted by violence and supporting Indigenous cultural competency training for health care workers, including Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Centres.

124. Newfoundland and Labrador's Aboriginal Patient Navigator Program enhances appropriate care for Indigenous people through employing two Patient Navigators of Aboriginal descent who work with Indigenous patients and clients to ensure their cultural and language translation needs are met.

***Employment***

125. Recent federal commitments aim to improve Indigenous education and job training, as well as ongoing Indigenous labour market programming designed to address employment barriers, such as low rates of education, and maximize Indigenous participation in the work force. These programs include the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy, the Skills and Partnership Fund, and the First Nations Job Fund.

126. Saskatchewan's Provincial Training Allowance (PTA) provides financial assistance to low-income learners to enable them to participate in eligible basic education and training programs. Over 80% of PTA recipients are of Indigenous ancestry and 65% are women.

127. Manitoba provides a total of $4.2 million annually toward the First Peoples Economic Growth Fund and the Métis Economic Development Fund that serve First Nations and Métis peoples respectively.

128. Nova Scotia's Aboriginal Community Development Fund supports community-led initiatives with economic outcomes and benefits for Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous people through a variety of business, cultural, social, ecological and economic development activities.

***Domestic and sexual violence***

129. Through the Action Plan to Address Family Violence and Violent Crimes Against Aboriginal Women and Girls (2015-2020), the Government of Canada's Victims Fund receives $1.325 million per year to: increase access to specialized victim services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women; and, support organizations in breaking intergenerational cycles of violence and abuse by raising awareness and building healthy relationships.

130. In February 2016, Ontario launched, Walking Together: Ontario's Long-Term Strategy to End Violence Against Indigenous Women. The strategy is a whole of government approach to address the high rates of violence against Indigenous women.

131. British Columbia introduced the Vision for a Violence Free BC Strategy in 2015. This long term strategy addresses all forms of violence against women — preventing violence before it happens, ensuring women have the supports they need to escape from violent situations, and recover if they've been victims of crime. Addressing violence against Indigenous women is one of the five strategic priorities in the strategy.

132. Saskatchewan provides a number of community-based programs to assist Indigenous women and girls who experience domestic and sexual violence, as well as families when people go missing, including police-based victims services programs that provide information, support, advocacy and referral for all victims of crime and specialized programs to assist victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.

133. The *Nunavut Family Abuse Intervention Act* has two orders — the emergency protection order and community intervention order — that are meant to help

individuals that are experiencing abuse and are in a spousal, an intimate, a family or a care relationship.

134. Northwest Territories has a number of programs and services in place to support victims of family violence, including access to emergency protection orders, Victims Services and the Victims of Crime Emergency Fund.

135. Prince Edward Island's Victim Services has a program where Indigenous victim assistants work closely with victim services to liaise and assist in providing services to Indigenous victims.

136. New Brunswick is developing a Strategy to prevent and respond to violence against Indigenous women and girls in the province.

**Question 17**

137. The high rate of Indigenous women and girls who are missing and murdered in Canada is a national tragedy that must be addressed immediately. In its submission in follow-up to the report of the CEDAW Committee concerning its inquiry, Canada outlined a number of ongoing efforts to address the high rates of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

138. August 3, 2016 marked a significant milestone for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, when the Government of Canada announced the appointment of five Commissioners to lead the independent Inquiry, as well as its Terms of Reference, and handed over all the input gathered during the pre-inquiry process to the independent Commission.

139. The Inquiry will be truly national and will be moving forward with the support of provinces and territories who have committed to legally adopt the Terms of Reference under their respective Public Inquiries Acts. Because the Inquiry is national, it will be able to look at systems and institutions that the participating provinces and territories are responsible for, such as policing and child welfare, and make meaningful recommendations related to these areas.

140. The Inquiry time line is from September 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018. The Commission will be provided $53.8 million by the federal government over the two years to complete its mandate. Parallel to the Inquiry, the Department of Justice Canada will provide $16.17 million for specialized victim services and the creation of Family Information Liaison Units to assist families, loved ones and survivors with getting information and support.

141. Canada will be pleased to provide more information to the Committee at the time of the review of its eighth and ninth reports.

## Women in detention

**Question 18**

***Incarceration rates***

142. The Government of Canada has pledged to comprehensively examine the current state of the criminal justice system, which will include consideration of the

overrepresentation of Indigenous persons in the criminal justice system as well as vulnerable populations.

143. Correctional Services Canada (CSC) continues to enhance its capacity to respond to this challenge and address the needs of Indigenous offenders through correctional interventions, specific cultural and spiritual programs and services, and through a sustained collaboration with Indigenous communities.

144. CSC works closely with ethnocultural community stakeholder groups to address issues in relation to the ethnocultural offender population, through a number of national and regional advisory bodies such as the National Ethnocultural Advisory Committee (NEAC). The needs of the female ethnocultural offender population are at the forefront of the NEAC's concerns.

145. The federal government works closely with P/T governments to support programs and projects that provide culturally appropriate justice options for Indigenous persons involved in the criminal justice system. For example, the Government of Canada supports Indigenous community-based restorative justice programs that offer alternatives to mainstream justice processes in appropriate circumstances.

146. Relevant information on African Canadians in the criminal justice system and on the incarceration of indigenous peoples, including on alternatives to imprisonment and the training of judges, prosecutors, lawyers and police, can be found in Canada's twenty-first to twenty-third reports on the ICERD (paragraphs 194-225).

***Classification system***

147. The CSC has several existing measures in place that directly align with the *Bangkok Rules*. Upon admission to custody, a federally sentenced woman undergoes a comprehensive and integrated evaluation, known as the Offender Intake Assessment. This assessment is comprised of validated actuarial scales, clinical judgment of experienced parole officers and other member of the case management team and, where appropriate, psychological assessments. The primary actuarial scale used upon admission is the Custody Rating Scale.

148. A review of classification occurs annually for most women offenders; however, the classification of maximum security women offenders occurs every six months, with certain exceptions. Security reclassification reviews include the application of an actuarial scale (the Security Reclassification Scale for Women (SRSW)), clinical judgment of experienced parole officers and, where appropriate, psychological assessment. The SRSW was developed specifically for women offenders and has since been revalidated for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders.

## Refugee and asylum-seeking women

### Question 19

149. Relevant information on detention and on access to appeal hearings can be found in Canada's twenty-first to twenty-third reports on ICERD (paragraphs 53 to 58).

150. The amendments contained in Bill C-43, *The Faster Removal of Foreign Criminals Act*, focused on inadmissibility-related provisions to enhance the safety and security of Canadians, strengthen the integrity of the immigration program, and facility entre to support Canadian interests. Current processes related to Canada's international obligations with regards to, for instance, non-refoulement and the treatment of asylum seekers were not affected by this Bill.

151. As well as enjoying a wide range of rights under the Charter and having access to various statutory bodies to protect their rights, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls are eligible for various social assistance programs, such as health-care services and education, as well as settlement and integration services.

## Marriage and family relations

### Question 20

152. The *Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act* contains specific provisions that address remedies for the legal consequences of relationship breakdown in the unique situations found in the context of First Nations reserves, where systems of property holding are different given the collective nature of land, and multiple generations or families may occupy the same home due to housing shortages, or Indigenous custom. To support the implementation of the Act, training and education is provided to key officials applying or enforcing the Act. The RCMP is delivering training to all employees, including front-line RCMP members on the provisional federal rules as they apply to First Nations Communities and the related processes and procedures responding to family violence pursuant to the law, to address potential situations on reserves resulting from relationship breakdown. Public Safety Canada is facilitating the development of educational resources to assist officers working in or with First Nations communities. The National Judicial Institute has included a seminar on the Act and independent organizations, such as the Manitoba Bar Association, have created material for the legal community, including judges and lawyers.